

My Hobby

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I tell how I first started my hobby and how it turned from just technique into an art when I discovered the beauties that were added when color film was used in place of ordinary panchromatic film.

The most interesting of my hobbies is photography. I began it a few years ago after I had saved enough money from my first job to buy a camera. I first began by taking black and white pictures of things of interest in the neighborhood, of neighbors, pets, and houses. The pictures as a whole were awful. Some negatives looked like a nigger in a coal pile at midnight; others looked like a polar bear in a snow storm. And then there were some in which I did manage to find the proper exposure but there was always something else wrong like taking a picture of a friend and cutting his head off or taking an action shot and getting a nice blur. Or what was worse, was when I would get a beautiful picture and would not be able to figure out what it was. However, as time went on, things began to improve and occasionally I would get a picture which might be worth saving. Well, just about this time the funds ran out and I had to shelve the camera.

A year ago last summer, after I had been working for about two months, I again decided to invest in photographic equipment. I decided that I would buy a better grade camera. A camera which would be easier to operate, more flexible, and of a better

engineering design. I looked around for awhile and finally decided on the Perfex. I found that it had all the necessary paraphernalia for taking good pictures and cost less than other cameras in its class. I bought the Perfex and found that my pictures became from excellent to awful in range. Since I could take good pictures sometimes, I concluded it was partly my fault and began to examine my technique and found that it was far from perfect. I analysed it and did improve.

Then a friend suggested that I try color film. I did, and that is the point at which photography changed to an art. Instead of being able to make a picture from anything, it became necessary to find a scene that is beautiful, that has composition of color as well as of objects. The color added atmosphere; made the picture alive. Ordinary scenes were transformed from lifeless grey to beautiful tints and shades. Grey leaves were transformed to leaves of delicate shades of green, red, orange, and various combinations. Trunks of trees turned from blacks to browns. Grey skies became blue. Dark grass became green. Combinations of colors replaced different shades of blacks, white and grey. It became necessary to learn composition all over again. Color composition replaced black and white composition. It became necessary to look for pictures, to look for color composition. It was no longer possible to find a scene and just balance darks against lights. Blues had to be balanced against yellows; reds had to be balanced against oranges. Color balance became the main object. It became an art in place of a technique.